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AUTHOR Piele, Philip K.
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ABSTRACT

This literature review, based on abstracts of documents announced in RIE, compiles information on the rescheduled school year. Following the review is a list of the 18 documents cited, their costs, and availability. (LLR)

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Rescheduled School Year Plans

by Philip K. Piele

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There are two basic reasons for rescheduling the school year: to obtain more efficient and economical use of staff and facilities, and to improve educational programs for students. Depending on which objective a school district wishes to achieve, it can choose among a surprisingly large variety of plans. However, most of these plans can be placed in two main categories: year-round school plans and extended school year plans.

Although some plans claim to achieve both economy and educational improvement, most stress either one goal or the other. Generally, year-round school plans stress economy, whereas extended school year plans stress educational improvement. Under year-round operation of the schools, a certain percentage of students are on vacation throughout the year so that each student attends school the traditional 175-180 days. Extended school year plans, on the other hand, increase to 200-240 the number of days a student attends school.

Reports cited in this review were processed by this and other clearinghouses in the ERIC system and were announced in *Research in Education (RIE)*, ERIC's monthly index and abstract catalog. The review is based on the reports' abstracts in *RIE*. Facsimile paper copy reproductions of all but two of the documents are available from the ERIC Document Reproduction Service. Complete instructions for ordering documents are given at the end of the review.

Reports Describe Variety of Plans

Thomas[1] describes four basic ways of rescheduling the school year: (1) the staggered quarter plan and its many variations, in which the schools operate year-round with vacations spread throughout the year; (2) the extended school year (204-212 days), with economies arising from student acceleration; (3) the summer school programs for remedial, makeup, or enrichment work; and (4) the multiple trails design. The multiple trails design, according to Thomas, is the most flexible of the rescheduled school year plans, because it does not rely on term rotation or acceleration to achieve desired goals and it permits educators to be innovative. Also, it allows for individualized programs, acceleration, and enrichment, and gives teachers time for individual development.

In an earlier report, Thomas[2] presented practical information concerning the continuous school year plan, the trimester plan, the quadrimester plan, the modified summer school plan, and the extended K-12 plan. He also discussed the effects of each plan on students, teachers, school facilities, school finance, and curriculum. Longrun financial benefits, according to Thomas, should accrue from savings in salaries, transportation costs, capital outlay, service, and building operation costs. The potential educational advantages of the various extended school year designs are a reduction in the number of dropouts, smaller class size, increased instructional time to meet the basic needs of each child without additional cost, more effective utilization of special facilities, and improved teacher quality resulting from the ability to pay higher salaries and thus to compete effectively for qualified individuals.

After discussing the traditional summer plan, an NEA-sponsored report[3] summarizes the operations, experiments, and studies that have been conducted on each of the following plans: rotating four quarter, continuous four quarter, extended school year, continuous progress, multiple trails, modified summer school, trimester, quadrimester, and extended K-12. The report also contains a bibliography of sixty-two books and articles, twenty-two research reports, and five research summaries on various rescheduled school year plans.

A report by the New York State Education Department[4] describes findings on the feasibility of extended school year plans and outlines several approaches for their implementation. Six plans are recommended: (1) the continuous-learning-year-cycling plan, which releases 25 percent of existing space in the first year; (2) the multiple variations such as the 45-15 or 9-3 plans, which release 33⅓ percent of existing space in the final year; (3) the multiple trails plan, which

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may release up to 35 percent of classroom space and/or 50 percent in an occupational training center; (4) the acceleration trimester plan, which releases space for one class at the end of the fourth trimester (a year and a quarter); (5) the acceleration quadrimester nine (two and one-quarter years); and (6) the acceleration split trimester and split quadrimester, which releases space for one class at the end of two to three years. Aspects of the plans' educational objectives and economies, including teacher salaries and staff utilization, are also discussed. The report states that as a result of the New York State experience, the experiment is ready to enter into a more extensive, practical application in school districts that want to realize the basic objectives for rescheduling a school year.

A report by the American Association of School Administrators[5] states that today's teacher shortages, overcrowded schools, and pressures to learn demand extensions of the school year. The publication analyzes five programs: (1) a staggered-vacation school year for all, (2) a full forty-eight-week school year for all, (3) a voluntary summer program, (4) a summer studies program for professional personnel, and (5) the multiple trails plan based on time modules. The report also briefly describes the Fulton County (Georgia) four-quarter plan, and cites several year-round college programs. An extensive bibliography is also included.

Year-Round Plans Offer Advantages

Bauman[6] maintains that the rising costs of education could be reduced by substituting a four-quarter rotational school calendar for the traditional school calendar. Under this system, each student would attend three continuous quarters and have the fourth quarter off. One-fourth of the students would thus be on vacation each quarter, and one-fourth fewer teachers would be required. Teacher salaries, however, would rise to compensate for the twelve-month contracts. The need for physical facilities would fall proportionately, providing an additional source of savings. These savings could be applied toward acquiring instructional materials for individualized instruction. Bauman claims that some social problems caused by inactive youth would be reduced since fewer would be on vacation at one time. Economic efficiency would be enhanced if employers could depend on student labor year-around.

At the beginning of the 1968-69 school year, the Atlanta Public Schools[7] implemented the four-quarter plan for reorganization of the secondary school curriculum. The year was divided into four quarters of approximately the same length. Pupils were compelled to attend the first three quarters of the 1968-69 term. Fourth-quarter attendance was optional. Pupils choosing to attend the fourth quarter could accelerate, add enrichment courses, or take remedial work. A pupil attending the fourth quarter could choose which three of the next four quarters he wished to attend, or could attend all four quarters.

Wehmhoefer[8] reviews the literature on the staggered four-quarter system, and discusses the advantages and disadvantages of the system.

The Arkansas School Study Council[9] published excerpts and summaries of thirteen speeches delivered at a national seminar instituted to serve as a clearinghouse of information on year-round education. The seminar brought together some of the nation's most creative educators to consider year-round schools as a means of improving the quality of education without increasing costs.

Recommendations Support Extended Year Plans

A 1965 study of the extended school year and the summer school program in the state of Utah led Petterson[10] to make five major recommendations: The summer program should be continued and expanded; increased communication and cooperation between the community and the schools is needed in the formulation of summer programs; class size of the summer program should be investigated further; student transportation should be improved; and use should be made of any industrial, historical, or recreational facilities the community has to offer.

A study team for the Delaware State Department of Public Instruction[11] sought to discover a rescheduled school year design that could be adopted and used to increase the efficiency of staff and school facilities in Delaware. Through a search of the literature, visits to three school districts, and a conference with a nationally recognized consultant, recommendations were made. Pilot programs were suggested for selected Delaware school districts to test the feasibility of two rescheduled school year plans: (1) at the elementary level, an extended term of approximately two hundred days to give more flexibility in the instructional program and to improve pay and status for teachers; (2) at the secondary level, a voluntary summer session to increase educational opportunities for students to make up work, accelerate their progress, or broaden their studies without the expense of revising school organization and curriculum. It was recommended that pilot projects be funded in equal amounts from state, ESEA Title III, and local sources. An annotated bibliography of ninety-one citations is included.

Keith[12] describes a twelve-month primary program for bilingual students. The program includes two hundred instructional days and short vacation periods. Teachers and pupils remain together from kindergarten through grade 3, and advancement is continuous and nongraded.

Cost Analysis Results in Recommendation

White[13] conducted a comprehensive analysis of the comparative costs of eight rescheduled school year plans under consideration for adoption by Polk County, Florida. After the initial analysis, he subjected four of the plans to special analysis: the regular year plus summer attendance; the staggered four-quarter plan; the trimester plan; and the continuous progress plan. The regular school year plus summer program, which operates without additional cost to parents, was favored by parents, teachers, and students. Under the plan, attendance is compulsory for students not promoted and voluntary for others. White recommends the continuous progress plan, contending it to be the best means of increasing educational quality while insuring the greatest return for dollars invested in the public schools.

Systems Analysis Assists Design of Continuous Progress High School

In the first part of a four-part report describing the application of systems analysis to the educational problems of a high school operating under the continuous progress plan, Egbert and Cogswell[14] relate the substance of interviews with Edmund Reed concerning the characteristics of the continuous progress school plan. The uniqueness of the plan is that it involves a radical departure from the traditional curriculum and an extensive use of new media. Although no fully implemented continuous progress school existed at the time of this report, the Brigham Young University Laboratory School had used parts of the plan at the elementary, junior high, and high school levels. In this report the authors present an overview of the continuous progress school, and describe, among other things, student movement through the school and preregistration and registration procedures.

In the second part of the study, Egbert and Cogswell[15] describe the design of a surveillance and detection system for use in the continuous progress school. The purpose of this system, part of an information processing center, is to monitor and survey study activities of students, to detect the presence of real and eminent problems in student performances, and to alert proper personnel for action.

The Instructional Materials Center (IMC) of the continuous progress school is described in part three of the study.[16] The authors conceive the IMC as combining the functions of the library, the bookstore, the audiovisual center, and the Materials Development Center.

Finally, in part four Cogswell and Marsh[17] describe the computer simulation of a continuous progress school. Students attending the school would be permitted to schedule themselves for course work on an autonomous basis. The system was set up to free the student from the disadvantages of traditional progression by allowing him to work in other courses while waiting for teaching assistance in another. Patterns of resource demand were determined for the assignment of one hundred high school students to five courses at one time. Whenever a student would require help, he could file a request for help and go on to his work in another course. The system was found useful for expanding simulation capability and for exploring its uses in course design.

Model Predicts Changes in Plant Use at Junior Colleges

Based on empirical data accumulated from twelve junior colleges under the two-semester calendar, Keene[18] developed a model to predict changes in plant use under the four-quarter calendar, given the following constraints: (1) The senior institutions in the state have adopted it; (2) the student's choice of quarter in which to enroll cannot be controlled; (3) feeder high schools generally follow the June graduation pattern, making articulation of terms difficult; and (4) junior college students have a high-attrition and low-persistence characteristic. Within these parameters, the model provides a comparison of plant use under various enrollment patterns and varying proportions of students electing year-round attendance. The model can also be used to examine subpopulations (e.g., by sex and by scholastic ability) and to compute their effects on facility use.

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Abstracts of the following documents can be located in *Research in Education*. (A subscription to *RIE* can be ordered from the U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402, for $21 a year.) The complete texts are available from the ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS), commercial channels, or both. To order from EDRS, indicate the "ED" number of each document and the type of reproduction desired—hard copy (HC) or microfiche (MF). Payment must accompany orders totaling less than $5 and must include a $0.50 handling charge on all orders. Also add applicable sales tax or submit tax exemption certificate when ordering from any state having a sales tax. Foreign orders, with the exceptions of Canada and Mexico, must include a 25 percent service charge, calculated to the nearest cent. Orders from Canada and Mexico must include a 15 percent service charge only if they exceed $50. Address requests to EDRS, The National Cash Register Company, 4936 Fairmont Avenue, Bethesda, Maryland 20014.

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